



MEDIA STATEMENT

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Clinical radiologists urge patients to not delay imaging tests as COVID-19 restrictions ease

Clinical radiologists are encouraging patients to attend their required imaging procedures and to not delay treatment, as COVID-19 restrictions ease in many states across Australia.

With the increase in travel, gyms and fitness centres reopening and recreational activities and community sport recommencing, we could see an increase in emergency department presentations and demand for radiology services.

Dr Lance Lawler, President of The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR) said that radiology clinics and departments are working hard to safeguard patients and ensure they can access radiology services.

“While we have seen changes to COVID-19 restrictions across Australia, some people may still be concerned about attending an imaging test or procedure and attending their health appointments more broadly. This is especially true as we see localised outbreaks in different regions.”

“We want people to know that we are doing everything we can to ensure a safe clinical environment. Delaying an imaging test or procedure could have serious health consequences – particularly if someone is suspected of having a serious disease or having ultrasounds for a pregnancy-related condition.” said Dr Lawler.

“If you have concerns, please speak to your doctor or your radiologist to discuss your situation. Please don’t assume that you should automatically delay your procedure, as this may not always be the right choice,” added Dr Lawler.

Centres across Australia and New Zealand have strict procedures and guidelines in place to reduce transmission of COVID-19.

The College is currently providing radiologists with the latest advice on screening, infection control and appropriate use of PPE to reduce COVID-19 transmission, based on the latest COVID-19 clinical evidence.



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“We want patients to feel reassured about the infection control measures put in place to keep people safe and healthy. Radiologists have adapted practice to limit patient contact, use multi-disciplinary teams and provide alternate methods of accessing specialist advice and treatment, including the use of telehealth where appropriate,” said Dr Lawler.

If patients are having an interventional procedure such as a biopsy or injection, information can be posted or emailed to patients before their appointment using telehealth services. This helps minimise the amount of contact people have with their practitioner.

If patients are feeling unwell, have respiratory symptoms or have had contact with a known or suspected case of COVID-19, they should call their radiology practice before attending an appointment and follow the directions of their local health authorities.

RANZCR is producing a range of resources to encourage patients to continue with their treatment, including videos and social media assets.

— ENDS —

If you would like any further information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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About RANZCR

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Radiologists (RANZCR) is the peak body advancing best practice across clinical radiology and radiation oncology for the benefit of patients and the healthcare system.

RANZCR’s role is to drive the safe and appropriate use of clinical radiology and radiation oncology to optimise health outcomes. Through leadership, education and advocacy, we support 4,500 members to provide quality services to patients. We administer world-class training programs for admission into our professions, accredit training sites, assess overseas-trained specialists, and oversee professional development by our members.